

REMARKS

- Claims 1 to 23 are pending
- Claims 1, 7, 13, 18, 22, and 23 have been amended herein
- Claims 1, 7, 13, 18, 22, and 23 are independent

Claims 1-5, 7 to 10, 12 to 15, 17 to 19, and 21 to 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(e) as anticipated by US Patent No. 6,766,464 (Collier). Claims 6, 11, 16 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Collier in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,807,377 (Watanabe).

In response thereto, Applicants have amended claims 1, 13, 22 and 23 to include the feature (or the like):

wherein a portion of the synchronization signals in the data streams may be suppressed and wherein a timer is used to determine a particular synchronization signal has been suppressed.

Claims 7 and 18 have been amended to include the feature (or the like):

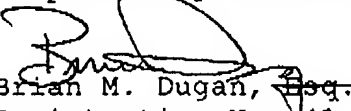
wherein information indicative of the respective timings of the data streams may be suppressed and wherein a timer is used to determine that information indicative of the respective timings has been suppressed.

Support for these amendments may be found, for example, on page 14, line 20 - page 15, line 1 of Applicants' specification.

Applicants respectfully submit that neither Collier nor Watanabe, alone or in combination, appear to disclose, teach or suggest such features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding rejections of independent claims 1, 7, 13, 18, 22 and 23, and corresponding dependent claims 2-6, 8-12, 14-17 and 19-21.

Applicants believe the claims are now in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the same. A Request for a Two Month Extension of Time is enclosed herewith, with authorization to charge the requisite extension fee to Deposit Account No. 04-1696. Applicants do not believe any additional fees are due regarding this Amendment. However, if any additional fees are required, please charge Deposit Account No. 04-1696.

Respectfully Submitted,


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